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May 30, 2019

Regional Freedom of Information Officer

U.S. EPA, Region 4

AFC Bldg, 61 Forsyth Street., S.W., 9th Floor (4PM/IF)

Atlanta, GA 30303-8960

*Via FOIAonline*

**RE: FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT (FOIA) REQUEST**

Dear Sir or Madam:

Pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act, 5 U.S.C. § 552, South Florida Wildlands Association (SFWA) requests from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) copies of documents as described below:

All documents relating to environmental review of the proposed toll highways in Florida as set forth in Florida Senate Bill 7068 (SB 7068) (“An act relating to transportation ... creating the Multi-use Corridors of Regional Economic Significance Program within the Department of Transportation”) and Florida House Bill 7113 (HB 7113) (“An act relating to transportation ... creating the Multi-use Corridors of Regional Economic Significance Program within the Department of Transportation”), introduced in the 2019 session of the Florida Legislature. The final version of SB 7068 authorizing the project, also known by its acronym “M-CORES,” was signed into law by Florida Governor DeSantis on May 17, 2019 (Chapter 2019-43, Laws of Florida). This request includes documents generated and received by EPA.

The term “document,” as used in this request, includes, but is not limited to, memoranda, reports, studies, manuals, guidelines, protocols, instructions, meeting notes, charts, photographs, maps, spreadsheets, and all other written communications (electronic or otherwise).

I would prefer that these documents be transmitted to me as e-mail attachment(s) in PDF, Word, or WordPerfect format if the documents are maintained in any of these formats, otherwise I would request that they be faxed to me at 954-206-0593, or mailed to me at 757 S.E. 17<sup>th</sup> Street, PMB 309, Fort Lauderdale, Florida 33316, in either print form or on a compact disc (CD).

SFWA requests a fee waiver for the costs associated with the response to this FOIA request. The

basis for the fee waiver is set forth below.

*1. The records concern the operations or activities of the Government.*

The FOIA request is clearly limited to a narrowly specified activity of EPA: its involvement in commenting on environmental impacts of two legislative bills in the 2019 session of the Florida Legislature.

*2. The disclosure of the requested records is likely to contribute to public understanding of these operations or activities.*

The requested material concerns the manner in which EPA provides input concerning proposed state legislation that affects the Florida environment.

*3. The release of these requested records will contribute significantly to public understanding of the governmental activities.*

Public understanding of EPA activities will be significantly assisted by the release of the requested records by enabling the public to understand how EPA makes decisions and evaluates impacts on the environment from a wide-ranging project of this magnitude.

Supporters of South Florida Wildlands Association (SFWA) are highly concerned about EPA's actions to protect the environment, including federally and state listed species, wetlands, springs, and other Florida natural resources. SFWA intends to provide the requested information to the general public through —

- Release to the news media;
- Posts on SFWA's Facebook page, which has over 80,000 followers;
- E-mails to an e-mail list of approximately 10,000 recipients.

Through these methods, SFWA generates media coverage and increased public awareness. Matthew Schwartz, the executive director of SFWA, has been quoted numerous times on behalf of SFWA in the media. Moreover, SFWA e-mail alerts have been reprinted on numerous websites and recirculated by other grassroots environmental organizations around the country.

*4. Disclosure would not serve a commercial interest of the requestor.*

Disclosure is in no way connected with any commercial interest of the requestors in that SFWA is a nonprofit, nonpartisan public interest organization concerned with protection of public lands, wildlife, and wildlife habitat. SFWA registered with the State of Florida as a non-profit corporation in March 2010, and has been granted tax-exempt status under Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

If you have any further questions related to SFWA's fee waiver request, please do not hesitate to contact me.

If the fee waiver is not granted, and if the expenses to be charged to my client exceed \$150.00, please obtain my approval before any such charges are incurred. You can contact me at 954-523-1131 or via e-mail at [mara@shlackmanlaw.com](mailto:mara@shlackmanlaw.com) for approval of expenses.

I will expect a response within 20 working days as provided by law. If my request is denied in whole or in part, I expect a detailed justification for withholding the records. I also request any segregable portions that are not exempt to be disclosed.

If you have any questions with regard to this request or have need for clarification with regard to the documents that are being requested, please contact my office.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter.

Very truly yours,

*/s/Mara Shlackman*

Mara Shlackman